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SOURCE PUBLICATIONS TO THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 17TH AND THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY¹

Research on the history of the Polish Jews has resulted, in recent years, in numerous publications. Yet, relatively little progress has been achieved as regards the publication of sources. A lack of source publications relating to the 17th and 18th centuries has been felt particularly acutely as in many cases the editors of older publications had mainly taken into consideration the documents dating back to earlier periods. One should also note that among the remaining publications, there predominate documents relating to the Jews from the royal towns, in which, particularly in the 18th century, there lived a minority of the Polish Jewry. It is estimated that at that time between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Polish Jews lived on private lands, finding particularly favorable conditions of life on the magnates' estates.² Moshe Rosman estimated that in the year 1765, as much as 4 per cent of the entire population of the Polish Jewry (around 30 thousand people,³) lived only on the territory of one magnates' family, e.g. the Czartoryski latifundium. Lack of an easily accessible selection of sources could also be experienced when working with students. No doubt, the selection of sources⁴ published by the Jewish Historical Institute, and in accordance with the author's intention for it to be used in schools, does not meet the requirements of an academic publication.

A relatively small number of source publications cannot be explained by the modest number of sources dating back to this period (on the contrary, their number is constantly growing), nor by a lack of interesting events and phenomena in the history of Polish Jews. The reason why work on the source publications relating to the 17th and 18th centuries had been launched was the conviction that this period in the history of the Jewish community inhabiting the former Polish Commonwealth was extremely

¹ The present article has been written on the basis of the introduction to a publication "Żydzi polscy 1648–1772. Źródła", A. Kaźmierczyk (ed.), *Studia Judaica Cracoviensia, Series Fontium* 6, Kraków 2001.

² G.D. Hundert, *Some Basic Characteristics of the Jewish Experience in Poland*, [in:] *From Shtetl to Socialism. Studies from Polin*, A. Polonsky (ed.), London–Washington 1993, p. 23.

³ M. Rosman, *The Lord's Jews. Magnate-Jewish Relations in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth during the 18th Century*, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1990, p. 41.

⁴ *Dzieje Żydów w Polsce XI–XVIII wiek. Wybór tekstów źródłowych*, P. Fijałowski (ed.), The Jewish Historical Institute in Poland.

interesting, important and, at the same time, very neglected with respect to making the published source materials more available. The period in question opens with the year 1648 which constitutes a clear-cut caesura both in the Polish and Jewish historiography. The outbreak of the Chmielnicki uprising initiated the period of the "golden age" for the Polish Jews; it was a period of relative stabilization, security and growth. To the contemporaries, the outbreak of the Chmielnicki uprising was undoubtedly a shock,⁵ but shortly afterwards on the same territories where whole Jewish communities had been annihilated Jewish life began to flourish yet again (naturally, with the exception of left-bank Ukraine).⁶ One can only agree with contemporary historians who, contrary to Simon Dubnow, are of the opinion that the subsequent generations of Jews were not overwhelmed by the burden of memories concerning the persecutions of 1648 experienced by their ancestors.⁷ Many events which were important for the Jews had taken place during the second half of the 18th century – beginning with the abolition of the Diet of the Four Lands in 1764 (as well as of its Lithuanian equivalent together with the regional organs of the Jewish self-government), and lasting to the partitions of Poland which meant a change of nationality and in its consequence, becoming subjected to a different legal system, often radically different from the traditions of the Polish-Lithuanian state. A debate on the reform of the legal status of the Jewish population was launched in the much restricted Commonwealth particularly at the time of the Four-Year Diet; n. b. the source materials concerning the Jews during this period were published in a separate volume of a valuable publication *Materiały do dziejów Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Materials to the History of the Four-Year Diet).⁸

The second half of the 17th century is a period in Jewish history which abounds in all sorts of contradictions. On the one hand, it is a time of a considerable (and rapid) increase of the size of the Jewish community; at the time, the Polish Commonwealth became an asylum for the biggest community of Jews in the world.⁹ On the other hand,

⁵ J. Raba, *Between Remembrance and Denial. The fate of the Jews in the Wars of the Polish Commonwealth During the Mid-seventeenth Century as Shown in Contemporary Writings and Historical Research*, New York 1995, pp. 37–70.

⁶ B. Weinryb, *The Jews of Poland. A Social and Economic History of the Jewish Community in Poland from 1100–1800*, Philadelphia 1982, pp. 195–199.

⁷ M. Rosman, *Founder of Hasidism. A Quest for the Historical Ba'al Shem Tov*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 1996, pp. 61–62.

⁸ *Materiały do dziejów Sejmu Czteroletniego*, vol. VI, A. Eisenbach, J. Michalski, E. Rostworowski, J. Woliński (eds.), Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1969.

⁹ The estimates quoted by scholars concerning the size of the Jewish community in 1648 vary between 170 and 450 thousand; also the extent of the losses in the effect of the Chmielnicki uprising and the wars which followed it, is defined differently by various authors; however, the latest research points out that the losses during this period were much smaller than was previously assumed – see: S. Stampfer, *Jewish Population in the Ukrainian Regions Before, During and After the Chmielnicki Uprising* (in print). Whereas in the subsequent decades the number of Jews increased considerably – see among others: J. Muszyńska, *Żydzi w miastach województwa sandomierskiego i lubelskiego w XVIII wieku*, Kielce 1998, and numerous publications by Z. Guldón. Although, one still comes across publications which give quite incredible estimates. E.g. M. Salman, "On the Dynamics of the Growth of the Jewish Population of Poland and Lithuania: a Demographic Summary of the Catastrophe of 1648–1660", *Journal of the Academic Proceedings of Soviet Jewry*, 1988, 1(2), pp. 146–147, is of the opinion that the number of Jews before the uprising exceeded 500 thousand, whereas the losses according to him amounted to around 305 thousand! Whereas the estimates of the size of the Jewish population after 1764 presented by R. Mahler, "Żydzi w dawnej Polsce w świetle liczb", *Przeszłość Demograficzna Polski*, 1967, 1, are much less controversial (the publication is an abridged version of its earlier version published in Yiddish).

it is a time of conflicts, both within the Jewish community itself, as well as persecutions of the Jews e.g. during the Chmielnicki uprising and the wars which followed it. The 18th century was not much better in this respect (e.g. the great northern war, the Cossack rebellion). The eighteenth century is a time of religious ferment and social conflicts, but it is also a time which marks the birth of Hassidism, a movement which had brought about a revival of Jewish orthodoxy in Central and Eastern Europe. It was also a time of the gradual decline of Jewish autonomy, both on the level of the local community, regional courts and the Diet of the Four Lands (Waad). This had ultimately led to the liquidation of the institution of the Jewish self-government (with the exception of the Jewish community)¹⁰ at the convocal Diet of 1764. At the same time, one has to remember that it was also a time of rapid growth of many forms of Jewish life, e.g. it was the heyday of the magnificent wooden architecture characteristic of the Jewish synagogues of the time.

Similarly, the attitude of the Christian community toward the Jews at the time was anything but uniform,¹¹ particularly that the medieval stereotypes were still very much in circulation. Let it suffice to say that in the 18th century when in Western Europe putting Jews on trial for the so called ritual murder or else the profanation of the Host had long been abandoned, in the Polish Commonwealth anti-Semitic books propagating these prejudices had still been published and the Jews continued to be convicted of

¹⁰ *Volumina Legum*, vol. I–VII, J. Ohryzko (ed.), Petersburg 1859–1860, *Konstytucja sejmu konwokacyjnego 1764*, pp. 44–50.

¹¹ When discussing the complex Polish-Jewish relations in the second half of the 17th and the first half of the 18th c., one should draw attention to: J. Goldberg, "The Changes in the Attitude of Polish Society Toward the Jews in the Eighteenth Century", Polin, 1986, 1, pp. 35–48, reprinted in: *From Shtetl to Socialism. Studies from Polin*, A. Polonsky (ed.), London–Washington 1993, pp. 50–63; by the same author, "Poles and Jews in the 17th and 18th Centuries. Rejections or Acceptance", *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 1974, 22, pp. 248–282; by the same author, "Die getauften Juden in Polen-Litauen im 16–18 Jahrhundert. Taufe, Soziale Umschichtung und Integration", *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 1982, 30, pp. 54–99; by the same author, "Społeczność żydowska w szlacheckim miasteczku. Żydzi w dawnym Wieruszowie", *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, (= *BŻIH*), 1966, 3, pp. 3–28; by the same author, "Żydowski sejm czterech ziem w społecznym i politycznym ustroju dawnej Rzeczypospolitej", [in:] *Żydzi w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, A. Link-Lenczowski and T. Polański (eds.), Wrocław-Kraków 1991, pp. 44–58; by the same author, "Gminy żydowskie (kahaty) w systemie władztwa dominialnego w szlacheckiej Rzeczypospolitej", [in:] *Między historią a teorią. Refleksje nad problematyką dziejów i wiedzy historycznej*, M. Drozdowski (ed.), Warsaw-Poznań 1988, pp. 152–171; by the same author, "Ludność żydowska w Łutomińsku w drugiej połowie XVIII w. i jej walka z feudalnym uciskiem", *BŻIH*, 1956, 15–16, pp. 183–204; by the same author, "Dzieje Żydów w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej – próba syntetycznego spojrzenia", [in:] *Między wielką polityką a szlacheckim partykularyzmem. Studia z dziejów nowożytnego Polski i Europy ku czci Profesora Jacka Staszewskiego*, K. Wajda et al. (ed.), Toruń 1993, pp. 337–352; also G.D. Hundert, *The Jews in a Polish Private Town. The case of Opatów in the Eighteenth Century*, Baltimore 1992; by the same author, "On the Jewish Community in Poland during the Seventeenth Century: Some Comparative Perspectives", *Revue des études juives*, 1983, 142, pp. 349–372; by the same author, "Jews, Money and Society in the Seventeenth-Century Polish Commonwealth: The Case of Kraków", *Jewish Social Studies*, 1981, 43, pp. 261–274; by the same author, "Kahal i samorząd miejski w miastach prywatnych w XVII i XVIII w.", [in:] *Żydzi w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, pp. 66–74; by the same author, "Polish Jewish History", *Modern Judaism*, 1990, 10, pp. 259–270; by the same author, "An Advantage to Peculiarity? The Case of Polish Commonwealth", *Association for Jewish Studies Review*, 1981, 6, pp. 21–38; by the same author, "Poland: Paradisus Judaeorum", *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 1997, 48, pp. 335–348; by the same author, "The Role of the Jews in Commerce in Early Modern Poland-Lithuania", *Journal of European Economic History*, 1987, 16, pp. 245–275.

the above, supposedly committed crimes.¹² Unfortunately, a substantial part of the elites of the Polish-Lithuanian state was still convinced that the above accusations were true. If such views had been shared by a number of Polish bishops,¹³ what could be expected of ordinary people. But the Jewish-Christian relations in the 17th and 18th centuries cannot be limited exclusively to the problem of Polish anti-Judaism, for we can also provide numerous examples of peaceful co-existence between the two communities, not only economic contacts. One has to emphasize that the attitude of the political elites of the Commonwealth to the participation of the Jews in the economic life was also subject to change and did not depend exclusively on the social class (although traditionally, the group which remained most hostile to the Jews were the townsfolk). In the 18th century, and particularly in its second half, the influence of the Enlightenment could be felt more and more strongly but unfortunately, this was not always beneficial to the Jews. Certain steps aiming at modernizing the old-fashioned structure of the Polish state had been undertaken – hence, the decision to liquidate the Jewish Diet. But in reality, “the Jewish issue” became more conspicuous in the political life of the Commonwealth after the year 1772, at the time of the Grand Diet.

An extremely valuable source publication devoted to the history of the Jewish population in Poland, is a book by Jakub Goldberg published in 1985 and containing privileges granted to the Jewish communities (many of them date back to the second half of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century).¹⁴ Recently Mordechaj Nadav has published the minutes and reports of the Jewish community in Tykocin¹⁵ on the basis of a copy made earlier by Israel Halperin who had himself published the minutes-book of the Jewish Diet (Waad Arba Aracot or the Four Lands Diet).¹⁶ The minutes book from the Diet of Lithuanian Jews appeared in print even earlier.¹⁷ The above list of Jewish source publications should be supplemented with the Poznań *Księga elektorów*

¹² Z. Guldón, J. Wijaczka, *Procesy o mordy rytualne w Polsce w XVI–XVII wieku*, Kielce 1995. The article by H. Węgrzynek, “Czarna Legenda” Żydów. *Procesy o rzekome mordy rytualne w dawnej Polsce*, Warszawa 1995, comprises the period until the middle of the 17th century.

¹³ Many 18th century pastoral letters contain more or less explicit accusations of the Jews’ ritual murder. Also, the famous report of Cardinal Ganganelli, the future pope Clement XIV, bears witness to the widespread conviction of the Polish bishops concerning the need to use Christian blood for ritual purposes by the Jews. See: *The Ritual Murder Libel and the Jew. The Report by Cardinal Lorenzo Ganganelli (Pope Clement XIV)*, C. Roth (ed.), London 1935. Unfortunately, the activity of some people within Church was not limited exclusively to propagating anti-Jewish accusations, e.g. bishop Kajetan Sołtyk or Rev. Stefan Żuchowski took an active part in the ritual murder trials.

¹⁴ *Jewish Privileges in the Polish Commonwealth. Charters of Rights Granted to Jewish Communities in Poland-Lithuania in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries*, J. Goldberg (ed.), Jerusalem 1985. The above volume was reedited in 2001. Besides, two subsequent volumes were published.

¹⁵ *Pinkas kehal Tiktin 381–566: haskamot hahlatot ve-takanot kefi she-heetikan min hapinkas hamekori she-avad ba-Szoah (Decisions and Regulations Hand Copied By Israel Halperin from the Original Minutes Book that was Lost in the Holocaust)*, I–II, M. Nadav (Markiel Katzykowich) (ed.), Jerusalem 1966–1999 (Publications Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities Section of the Humanities).

¹⁶ *Pinkas Waad ‘Arba Aratzot. Acta Congressus Generalis Judaeorum regni Poloniae (1580–1764) quae supersunt omnia cum deperditorum fragmentis et testimonies collegit explanavit et editit Israel Halperin*, Hierosolymis 1945. An expanded re-edition of the above publication, prepared by I. Bartal appeared in 1986.

¹⁷ *Pinkas ha-medina o pinkas waad ha-kehilot ha-rashijot b-medinat Lita (1623–1761)*, S. Dubnov (ed.), Berlin 1925. The publication appeared in the years 1907–1909 as a supplement to a magazine *Evrejskaja Starina* published in Russian.

(*Pinkas ksherim shel kehilat Pozna*)¹⁸ published by D. Avron, as well as the earlier publication by Bernard D. Weinryb.¹⁹ However, all of the above publications (except for J. Goldberg's book) remain practically out of reach for the average Polish student (largely due to a language barrier – as only a small fragment of the above documents have been published in Polish).

As regards Polish language publications relating to the history of the Jews in the 17th and 18th centuries, recently there have appeared memoirs of Reb Dow of Bolechów,²⁰ edited by Roman Marcinkowski. Source materials relating to the life story of Jakub Frank and the history of frankism have been published by Jan Doktór.²¹ The same scholar has published reports of Protestant missionaries associated with the Institutum Judaicum et Muhammedicum in Halle, set up in 1728, associated with their missionary work in Poland.²² A different type of publication was initiated by Janina Morgesztern in the Bulletin published by the Jewish Historical Institute; in the years 1963–1969, she had published records of documents from the Crown Register.²³ Her work was later continued by Maurycy Horn who extended his research to include the more recent series of books from the Crown Register, and also published excerpts from selected documents from the years 1697–1795.²⁴ The publication presenting the records from the registers of the Kraków province during the reign of King John III Sobieski,²⁵ as well as the latest of the Lublin records,²⁶ have a similar character. Yet none of the above publications allow one to get acquainted with the entire text of a given document. The above publications, no doubt, are of great help to the researcher, yet they are useless as a didactic aid. Another publication, which is aimed mainly at researchers specializing in the history of Jewish trade, contains excerpts from the Kraków customs records, edited by Jan Małecki and Elżbieta Szlufik; the above publication also includes the period up to the year 1648.²⁷

¹⁸ *Acta Electorum Communitatis Judaeorum Posnaniensium (1621–1835)*, D. Avron (ed.), Hierosolymis 1966 (pub. in Hebrew). See also: "Pinkas K'szejrim (A Minutes Book of the Electors in the Jewish Community in Poznań)", F. Kupfer (ed.), *BŻIH*, 1953, 3, pp. 56–121.

¹⁹ B. D. Weinryb, *Texts and Studies in the Communal History of Polish Jewry*, New York 1950.

²⁰ *Pamiętniki Reba Dowa z Bolechowa (1723–1805)*, translated from Hebrew and edited by R. Marcinkowski, Warsaw 1994. See: a critical review by J. Goldberg, *KH*, 1995, 3–4, pp. 288–290.

²¹ *Rozmaite adnotacje, przypadki, czynności i anegdoty Pańskie*, J. Doktór (ed.), Warszawa 1996 and *Księga słów Pańskich. Ezoteryczne wykłady Jakuba Franka*, J. Doktór (ed.), Warszawa 1997.

²² *W poszukiwaniu żydowskich kryptochrześcijan. Dzienniki ewangelickich misjonarzy z ich wędrówek po Rzeczpospolitej w latach 1730–1747*, translation and edition by J. Doktór, Warszawa 1999; also see: *Rabbiego ... zwanego Baal Szem Towem to jest mistrzem dobrego imienia pouczenia o Bogu zestawione z okrucichów przez Martina Bubera*, translation by J. Doktór, Warszawa 1993.

²³ "Regestry z Metryki Koronnej do Historii Żydów w Polsce (1633–1660)", *BŻIH*, 1966, 2, pp. 107–150; "Regestry dokumentów z Metryki Koronnej i Sigillat do historii Żydów w Polsce (1669–1696)", *BŻIH*, 1969, 69, pp. 71–109. The above mentioned collections of records constitute a continuation of the previous documents relating to the years 1574–1632.

²⁴ *Regestry dokumentów i ekscerptów z Metryki Koronnej do historii Żydów w Polsce 1697–1795*, M. Horn (ed.), vol. 1: *Czasy saskie (1697–1763)*, Wrocław 1988. Earlier on M. Horn had published them in *BŻIH*.

²⁵ *Materiały źródłowe do dziejów Żydów w księgach grodzkich dawnego województwa krakowskiego z lat 1674–1696. Lata 1674–1683*, A. Kaźmierczyk (ed.), Kraków 1995.

²⁶ "Materiały źródłowe do dziejów Żydów w księgach grodzkich lubelskich z doby panowania Augusta II Sasa 1697–1733", H. Gmiterek (ed.), *Judaica Lublinensia*, vol. I, Lublin 2001.

²⁷ *Handel żydowski w Krakowie w końcu XVI i w XVII wieku. Wypisy z krakowskich rejestrów celnych z lat 1593–1683*, J. Małecki, E. Szlufik (eds.), Kraków 1995.

It is also worth consulting some earlier source publications, particularly *Dyplomatoryusz dotyczący Żydów w dawnej Polsce na źródłach archiwalnych osnuty (1388–1782)*.²⁸ Unfortunately, a substantial part of the documents from the period 1648–1782 were included in the above volume only in the form of summaries. The value of this publication is also decreased due to a considerable number of editorial errors. In the second half of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, a multi-volume source publication, *Akty izdavaemye Vilenskoju Archeografičeskoju Kommissseju*, was published; the above publication contains two volumes of source materials relating to the Jews.²⁹ Naturally, the published documents relate to the history of the Jews from the former Grand Lithuanian Duchy, and particularly its main Lithuanian Jewish communities, i.e. Brześć, Grodno, Pińsk and Vilno. Moreover, the above materials come from court registers and although of topical importance, they reflect only certain aspects of the contemporary Jewish life. The multi-volume Russian publication based on files preserved in the archives of the Vitebsk and Mohylev provinces seems to be of considerably less importance, as information concerning Jews occurs in it only sporadically, though some of it is quite important. The above publication includes for instance the so called "Fructus spirituals", that is reports of the Jesuit college in Vitebsk, in which one can find information on the number of neophytes, sometimes with many additional details.³⁰ The publication entitled *Archiv Jugo-Zapadnoj Rossii*³¹ contains sources limited to the territory of the Ukraine. Majer Bałaban's Polish translation of Natan Hanner's well-known chronicle *Jawein Mecula* was published and edited by Franciszek Rawita-Gawroński.³²

Many valuable documents concerning the history of the Polish Jews appeared in publications which were not necessarily devoted to them. Undoubtedly, one cannot do without parliamentary acts³³ which were published in *Volumina Legum*. The existing publications containing documents from the regional dietines³⁴ are equally indispensable.

²⁸ *Dyplomatoryusz dotyczący Żydów w dawnej Polsce na źródłach archiwalnych osnuty (1388–1782)*, M. Bersohn (ed.), Warszawa 1911.

²⁹ AWAK; volume XXIX comprising the second half of 17th c. and the 18th c. is especially valuable: *Akty o Ewrejach*, Vil'na 1902, it comprises, above all, documents from the earlier period. A considerable amount of documents relating to the Jews can also be found in vol. V: *Akty brestskogo i gorodneskogo gorodskich sudov*, Vil'na 1871.

³⁰ *Istoriko-juridičeskoe Materialy izvlečennnye iz aktovych knig gubernij Vitebskoj i Mogilevskoj*, vol. I–XXXI, A. Sazanov (ed.), Vitebsk 1871–1903.

³¹ Especially part V, vol. II: *Archiv Jugo-Zapadnoj Rossii izdavaemyj Kommissseju dlja razbora drevnich Aktov*, Kijev 1890 (henceforth: AJZR) – publishes lists of Jewish citizens from the years 1765–1791. Other volumes also contain sources relating to the Jews.

³² "Jawein Mecula t.j. Bagno głębokie. Kronika zdarzeń z lat 1648–1652 napisana przez Natana Hanner'a z Zaslavia i wydana po raz pierwszy w Wenecji w r. 1656", transl. and ed. M. Bałaban, [in:] *Sprawy i rzeczy ukraińskie. Materiały do dziejów Kozaczyzny i Hajdamaczyzny*, F. Rawita-Gawroński (ed.), Lvov 1914, pp. 1–76, published earlier [in:] "Kroniki, opisy i elegie hebrajskie z czasów Chmielnickiego", M. Bałaban (ed.), *Ruś*, 1911, 1, Book 1, pp. 46–63; Book 2, pp. 152–176; Book 3, pp. 285–300, Book 4, pp. 397–412.

³³ VL, vol. I–VII.

³⁴ *Akta grodzkie i ziemskie z czasów Rzeczypospolitej z Archiwum tzw. bernardyńskiego we Lwowie*, vol. XXI–XXIII, A. Prochaska (ed.), Lvov 1911 (akta wiszeńskie); vol. XXIV–XXV, ed. ibid., Lwów 1931 (akta halickie); *Akta sejmikowe województwa krakowskiego*, vol. II–V, A. Przyboś (ed.), Kraków 1953–1984; *Lauda sejmikowe ziemi dobrzyńskiej*, F. Kluczycki (ed.), Kraków 1887; *Dzieje ziemi kujawskiej oraz akta historyczne do nich służące*, vol. II–V, A. Pawiński (ed.), Warszawa 1888; AJZR, part II, vol. 1–3, Kijev 1861–1910 (akta bractawskie, czernihowskie, kijowskie i wołyńskie); AWAK, vol. IV (akta woj.

ble. Many valuable sources to the history of the judiciary system can be found in the publication *Zbiór aktów do historii ustroju sądów prawa polskiego i kancelarii sądowych województwa krakowskiego z wieków XVI–XVIII*.³⁵ A selection of resolutions relating to the Jews and issued by diocese synods in the former Polish Commonwealth was published in a volume entitled *Decretales Summorum Pontificum pro Regno Poloniae et Constitutiones synodorum provincialium et dioecesanorum Regni ejusdem ad summam collectae*...³⁶ In the subsequent volumes of *Conciliae Poloniae*, edited by Jakub Sawicki after World War II, one could also come across canons relating to the Jews *De Judaeis*.³⁷ Undoubtedly, a valuable source of information relating to the history of the Jews living on the territories belonging to the Crown, are the documents from inspections of royal estates, the majority of which have already been published.³⁸ The rulings concerning the administration of private estates and relating to Jewish communities and leases of state and private property, among others in Opatów, appeared in a publication *Instrukcje gospodarcze dla dóbr magnackich i szlacheckich z XVII–XIX wieku*.³⁹ The verdicts of the court in Birża, including those relating to the local Jews and Karaites appeared in a Lithuanian publication *Birżų dvaro teismo knygos*.⁴⁰ Sources to the history of the Jews in individual towns can be found in the editions of the rights and privileges of Polish towns, such as e.g. Kraków,⁴¹ Poznań,⁴² as well as other smaller places, such as Łańcut,⁴³ Tarnopol,⁴⁴ or Zabłudów.⁴⁵

1861–1910 (akta bractwawskie, czernihowskie, kijowskie i wołyńskie); AWAK, vol. IV (akta woj. brzesko-litewskiego).

³⁵ "Zbiór aktów do historii ustroju sądów prawa polskiego i kancelarii sądowych województwa krakowskiego z wieków XVI–XVIII", S. Kutrzeba (ed.), *Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej PAU*, vol. VIII, part 2, Kraków 1909.

³⁶ *Decretales Summorum Pontificum pro Regno Poloniae et Constitutiones synodorum provincialium et dioecesanorum Regni ejusdem ad summam collectae*..., Z. Chodyński, E. Likowski (eds.), vol. III, Poznań 1883.

³⁷ *Concilia Poloniae. Źródła i studia krytyczne*, J. Sawicki (ed.), vol. 1–10, Warszawa 1948–1963; see: canon "de Iudaeis" also in I. Subera, *Synody prowincjonalne arcybiskupów gnieźnieńskich. Wybór tekstów ze zbioru Jana Wężyka z r. 1761*, Warszawa 1981.

³⁸ *Lustracja województwa krakowskiego 1765*, A. Falniowska-Gradowska (ed.), Warszawa–Kraków 1973; *Lustracje dóbr królewskich województwa płockiego 1565–1789*, A. Sucheni-Grabowska, S.M. Sacherska (eds.), Warszawa 1965; *Lustracja województwa ruskiego 1661–1665*, part 1: *Ziemia przemyska i sanocka*, K. Arłamowski, W. Kaput (eds.), Wrocław 1970; part 2: *Ziemia lwowska*, E. Arłamowska, K. Arłamowski (eds.), Wrocław 1974; part 3: *Ziemia halicka i chełmska*, E. Arłamowska, K. Arłamowski, W. Kaput (eds.), Wrocław 1976; *Lustracja województwa sandomierskiego 1660–1664*, H. Oprawko, K. Schuster (ed.), vol. I, Kraków 1971, vol. II Wrocław 1977; *Lustracja województw wielkopolskich i kujawskich 1659–1665*, part I: *Województwa poznańskie i kaliskie*, Cz. Ohryzko-Włodarska (ed.), Wrocław 1978; part II: *Województwa sieradzkie, łęczyckie, brzesko-kujawskie, inowrocławskie i ziemia dobrzyńska*, Z. Górski, J. Pakulski, A. Tomczak (eds.), Toruń 1996; *Lustracja dóbr królewskich województwa lubelskiego 1661*, H. Oprawko, K. Schuster (eds.), Warszawa 1962.

³⁹ *Instrukcje gospodarcze dla dóbr magnackich i szlacheckich z XVII–XIX wieku*, B. Baranowski, J. Bartyś, A. Keckowa, J. Leskiewicz (eds.), Wrocław 1958.

⁴⁰ *Birżų dvaro teismo knygos 1620–1745*, V. Raudeliūnas and R. Firkovičius (eds.), Vilnius 1982.

⁴¹ *Prawa, przywileje i statuta miasta Krakowa 1507–1795*, F. Piekosiński (ed.), Kraków 1895–1909.

⁴² *Przywileje miasta Poznania XIII–XVIII wieku*, W. Maisel (ed.), Poznań 1994.

⁴³ *Kopiarz przywilejów miasta Łańcuta*, M. Nitkiewicz (ed.), Łańcut 1986.

⁴⁴ *Przywileje królów i właścicieli miasta Tarnopola znajdujące się w archiwum miejskim*, J. Leniek (ed.), Tarnopol 1892.

⁴⁵ *Prawa i przywileje miasta i dóbr ziemskich Zabłudów XV–XVIII w.*, J. Maroszek (ed.), Białystok 1994.

Many important documents relating to the Jewish community had been published by various authors in supplements to monographic publications. At this point, one ought to mention the book by Mojżesz Schorr *Żydzi w Przemyślu do końca XVIII wieku*.⁴⁶ Source materials concerning the accusations of the Jews of ritual murder in the former Polish Commonwealth were edited by Jacek Wijaczka and Zenon Guldón.⁴⁷ An equally vast supplement, rich in source materials, can be found in the book by Zbigniew Pazdro on the Jewish voivode courts.⁴⁸ Whereas scholars specializing in the history of the Jewish autonomy, will find a lot of useful source material in the book edited by Louis Lewin entitled *Die Landessynode der großpolnischen Judenschaft*.⁴⁹

Apart from the above-mentioned publications, a number of source documents relating to the Jews, have appeared in academic journals and local magazines, as well as in studies devoted to individual towns. Naturally, it is impossible to mention all of them here. However, one must not fail to mention the achievements of a host of scholars who published their work in the Bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute. In the course of nearly 50 years, a huge number of source documents dating back to the times of the Polish Commonwealth of the Gentry, have been published in it.⁵⁰ Among them, it is worth drawing attention to the materials concerning the Four Lands Diet,⁵¹ the edition of the minutes from the sessions of the Jewish funeral brotherhoods,⁵² the Jewish communities,⁵³ instructions for the Jewish communities, or else documents concerning various aspects of contemporary Jewish life.⁵⁴ A considerable number of source materials (besides the already mentioned minutes from the Diet of Lithuanian Jews) were also published in the, now almost inaccessible, magazine "Evrejskaja Starina" which was published in Russian in the years 1907–1928.

The book of Polish source materials to the history of the Jews in the Polish Commonwealth, mentioned at the beginning, which became the real reason for writing the present article, was on the one hand, to constitute a didactic aid for students of history and of Judaism, and on the other, it was to make more accessible to academics and scholars the so far unpublished documents from the 17th and 18th centuries (a mere handful of the now published documents had appeared in print earlier and they are practically inaccessible). At the same time, an attempt was made to present the varied

⁴⁶ M. Schorr, *Żydzi w Przemyślu do końca XVIII wieku*, Lwów 1903, pp. 73–274. In 1991 the book was re-edited in Jerusalem with the introduction by J. Goldberg.

⁴⁷ Z. Guldón, J. Wijaczka, op. cit., pp. 102–162.

⁴⁸ Z. Pazdro, *Organizacja i praktyka żydowskich sądów podwojewódzińskich w okresie 1740–1772*, Lwów 1903, pp. 159–286.

⁴⁹ L. Lewin, "Die Landessynode der Großpolnischen Judenschaft", [in:] *Schriften der Gessellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*, 27, Frankfurt 1926, pp. 67–114. Earlier on Lewin published source materials in "Neue Materialien zur Geschichte der Vierländersynode", *Jahrbuch der jüdisch-literarisch Gesellschaft in Frankfurt a/Main*, 1905–1906, 1–2 and 1916, 11.

⁵⁰ In the year 2001, M. Czajka published a bibliography of the contents of this journal for the years 1950–2000, *BŻIH*, 2001, 199, pp. 393–531.

⁵¹ "Ordynacja dla sejmu żydowskiego ziem koronnych z 1753 r.", J. Goldberg, A. Wein (eds.), *BŻIH*, 1964, 52, pp. 17–34.

⁵² "Pinkas bractwa pogrzebowego i dobroczynnego w Zamościu", F. Kupfer (ed.), *BŻIH*, 1951, 4, No 2, pp. 47–80.

⁵³ "Pinkas gminy żydowskiej w Boćkach", A. Michałowska (ed.), *BŻIH*, 1999, 2, pp. 53–97.

⁵⁴ E.g. the one published by J. Morgensztern, "Inwentarz mienia kupca zamojskiego Lejby Józefowicza (1675)", *BŻIH*, 1969, 70, pp. 51–72; see also: "Do kwestii walki klasowej w społeczeństwie żydowskim w Polsce w drugiej połowie XVIII w.", A. Eisenbach (ed.), *BŻIH*, 1956, 17, pp. 129–170; 18, pp. 60–113.

character of the sources which can be used in research on the history of Polish Jews. Likewise, it was attempted to present the Jews in a variety of life situations, some of them quite unique; moreover, some of the materials used were meant to arouse the interest of not only historians, but non-historians as well.

The editor of the above publication tried to take into consideration the materials which were based directly on manuscripts; he tried to define the place the Jews had occupied within the society of the former Polish Commonwealth in as varied and many-sided a way as possible, taking into consideration the various categories of sources. Hence, the published materials as well as old prints had been purposefully omitted (with very few exceptions). The idea was, above all, to provide the students with materials that would help them understand the various aspects of Jewish existence in the former Polish Commonwealth. All along, the awareness of the needs associated with the necessity of implementing certain didactic goals, had been accompanied by a striving to bring to light certain new documents which could shed a slightly different light on what one might consider well-known problems.

Such a character of the publication imposed certain limitations, and above all, it meant that it contained only a fraction of all available Polish sources concerning the Jews. Certain categories of the published sources should appear in separate editions. No doubt, it would be worth publishing the legal regulations issued by the central administration of the Polish Commonwealth concerning the Jews, maybe except the so called "privileges" for the Jewish communities, as the latter thanks to J. Goldberg's publication, have already been made available in a wider selection. Yet, for instance the immense collection of all kinds of documents: voting regulations, "legal codes", manifestos and mandates, remain practically unavailable. The publication of Jewish petitions might constitute an equally interesting publication. Another valuable source which would definitely be worth publishing are the acts of the so called general commissions (that is courts appointed by the central authorities) which looked into all contentious issues, often revising certain regulations and instituting new laws. These type of source materials are extremely valuable not only to scholars and researchers, specializing in the history of Christian-Jewish relations, but also to historians dealing with social, economic, and even church history. Maybe it is worth thinking over the idea of publishing source materials relating to a single, concrete problem, e.g. accusations of the Jews of ritual murder in the former Polish Commonwealth, or else files which can be traced to a single uniform source, e.g. church documents. The new source publications could introduce into academic circulation documents which are now hardly accessible, and they could surely enable scholars to formulate new ideas or else confirm the existing ones with regard to the situation of the Jews in the former Polish Commonwealth. They could also shed light on the varied roles which the Jews had then played within the Polish society.

